GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2735
ANSWERED ON:10.05.2016
Deep Sea Fishing
Senguttuvan Shri Balasubramaniam

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is implementing the recommendations of the Dr. Meena Kumari Committee on deep-sea fishing despite the opposition of the local fishing communities in the country who apprehend that the recommendations of the Committee on deep-sea fishing would adversely affect their livelihood;
(b) whether the Government has consulted with the local fishing communities on the question of implementation of the recommendations of Dr. Meena Kumari Committee;
(c) whether the apprehension of local fishing community has any factual basis that fish output in water upto a depth of 200 Mts. in the country's territorial waters has recently plateaued considerably and if deep-sea fishing by deep sea vessels are allowed in the Exclusive Economic Zone even the poor yield would completely vanish, if so the details thereof;
(d) whether the Government has invited applications for deep-sea fishing from 250 deep-sea vessels for issue of 270 Letters of Permit, if so, the details thereof; and
(e) the steps taken by the Government to address the apprehensions and concerns of the local fishing communities in this regard?

Answer

ANSWER
MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

(DR.SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN)

(a) & (b) The report submitted by the Expert Committee under the chairpersonship of Dr. B. Meenakumari was received on 05.8.2014. The said report was shared in the public domain on 20.8.2014 for inviting comments from all stakeholders including fishermen communities. Considering the representations received from a majority of stakeholders, fishermen communities and associations the recommendations of the said Committee have not been considered for implementation.
(c) The marine fish production in the country during the last four years has been reported as 33.20 lakh tonnes in 2012-13; 34.39 lakh tonnes in 2013-14; 36.55 lakh tonnes (Provisional) in 2014-15 and 35.83 lakh tonnes (Provisional) in 2015-16 respectively, against the potential yield of 44.12 lakh tonnes estimated for the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The variations in fish production may be attributed to several reasons such as high fishing pressure, changes in fishing gear dimensions, over capacity, pollution, environmental factors, climate change etc. Deep-sea fishing vessels (DSFVs) in the Exclusive Economic Zone are only allowed to carry out resource-specific fishing beyond 12 nautical miles from the territorial limits. Apprehensions of local fishing community, if any, regarding poor fish yield in territorial waters due to operation of these DSFVs are largely unsubstantiated, as the areas of operation as well as targeted resources are different in case of DSFVs and the local traditional fishing communities.
(d) No, Madam.
(e) A committee has been constituted on 28th July, 2015 under the chairmanship of Dr. S. Ayyappan, former Director General, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) with terms of reference to inter alia ascertain the present status of exploitation of marine fishery resources by various sectors, namely, traditional sector, mechanized boats sector and deep-sea fishing vessels; and to consult all stakeholders for preparing a draft National Policy on Marine Fisheries for over-all development of marine fisheries in India.

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